



ANIMAL *playtime*




Watch young animals learn to play, and play to learn

ANIMAL *playtime*



DK Publishing



You'll have lots
of fun seeing
how we play!



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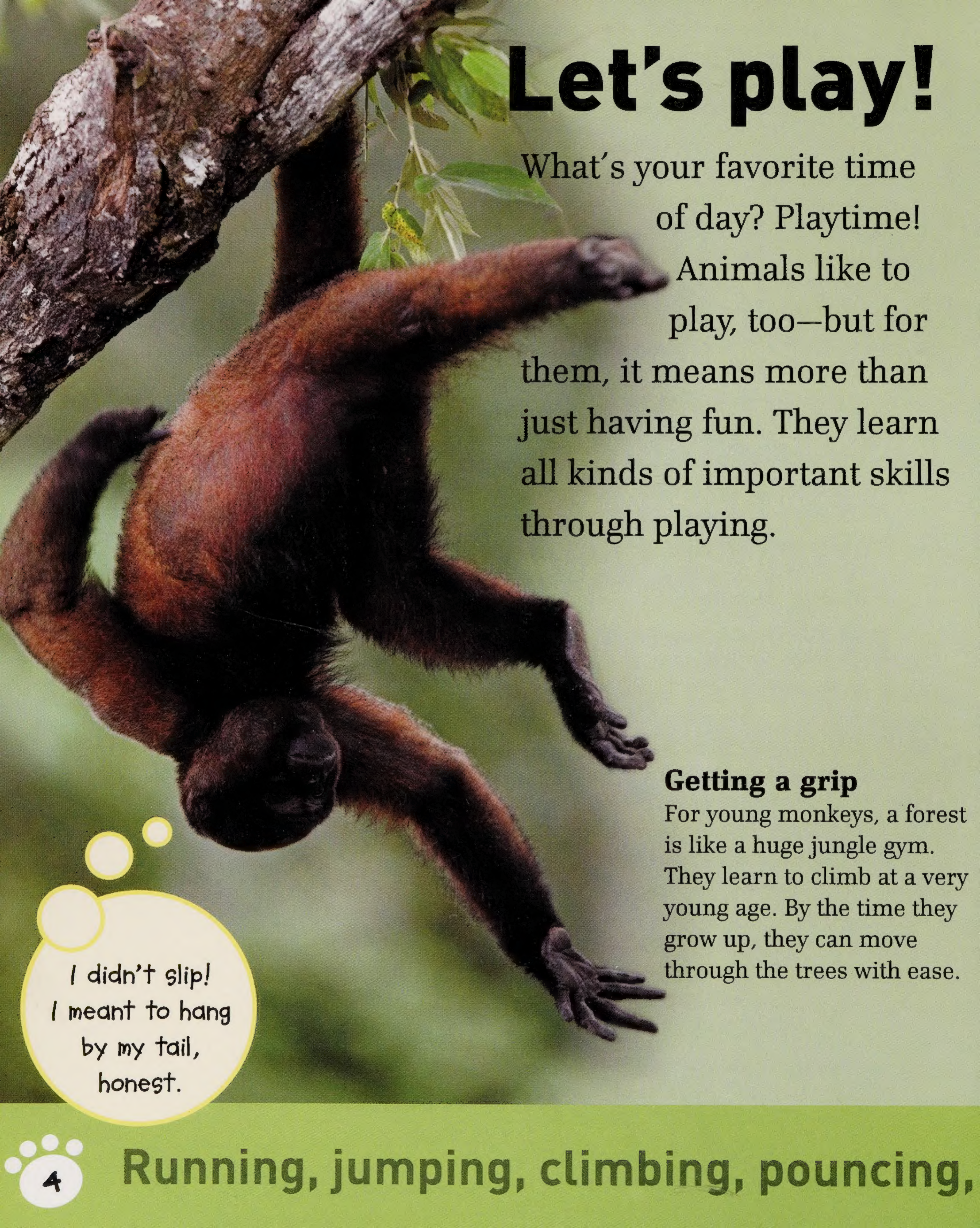
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Contents

4	Let's play!	34	Look behind you!
6	Pet playground	36	Spot the cheetah
8	Crazy cats	38	A day of play
10	I found it!	40	Playing in the mud
12	Leaping lambs	42	Caught you!
14	Just horsing around	44	Monkey business
16	Duck rides	46	Pandas at play
18	Fox cub fun	48	Hanging around
20	Polar playground	50	Hop, skip, and jump
22	Riding the waves	52	Let's make snowballs
24	Fun in the forest	54	Surfing sea lions
26	King of the castle	56	Easy does it
28	I've got you!	58	Ready, set, go!
30	Time for a rest	60	Making friends
32	It's a bear's life	62	Glossary and credits
		64	Index





Let's play!

What's your favorite time of day? Playtime!

Animals like to play, too—but for them, it means more than just having fun. They learn all kinds of important skills through playing.

Getting a grip

For young monkeys, a forest is like a huge jungle gym. They learn to climb at a very young age. By the time they grow up, they can move through the trees with ease.

I didn't slip!
I meant to hang
by my tail,
honest.

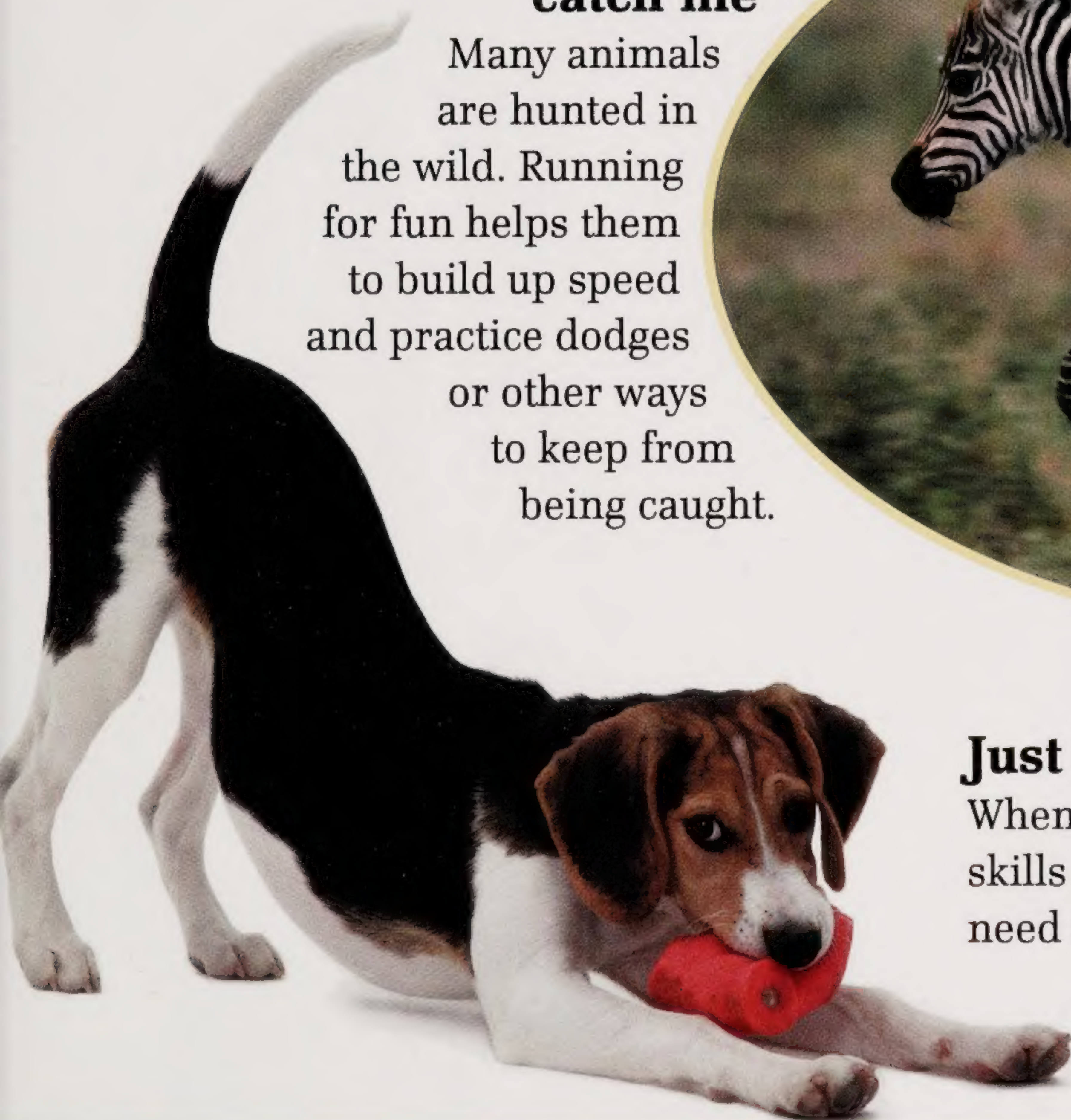


Making friends

Lots of animals live in groups. The best way for them all to get along is to play together, just like you do with your friends.

You can't catch me

Many animals are hunted in the wild. Running for fun helps them to build up speed and practice dodges or other ways to keep from being caught.



Just for fun

When a dog chases a ball, it's using skills that wild dogs, such as foxes, need for hunting. Fox cubs learn to chase and pounce through play-fighting with other cubs.

wrestling—how do you like to play?

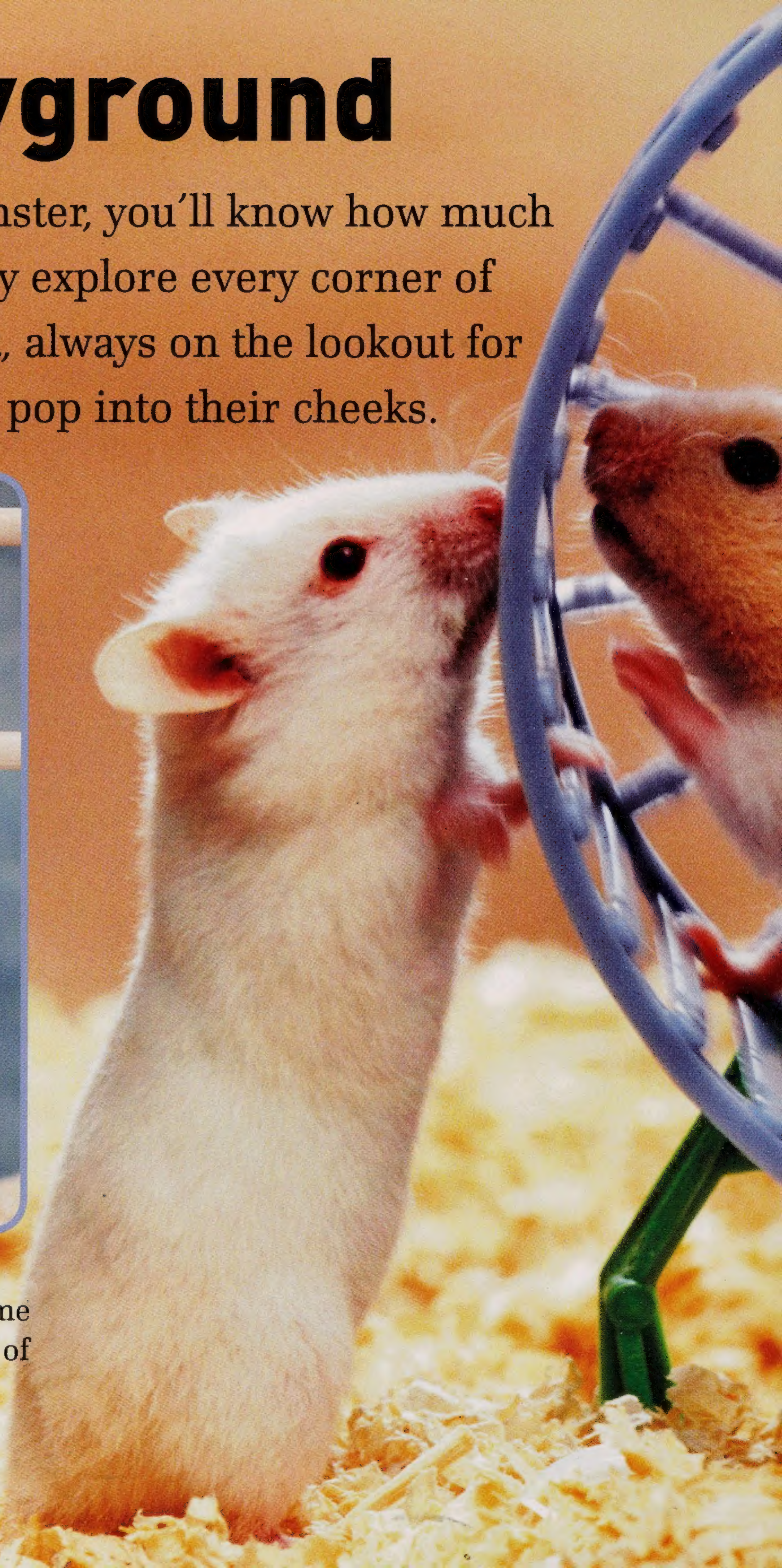
Pet playground

If you have a pet hamster, you'll know how much they love to play. They explore every corner of their burrow at night, always on the lookout for interesting snacks to pop into their cheeks.



I love to climb

Hamsters sleep all day and come out at night. They like a choice of objects to clamber over.





Yum, tasty!

Keeping fit

A hamster wheel helps to keep a hamster in shape, and it will crawl through any tunnel it finds.



Can you see me?

Crazy cats

Cats of all ages like to play and have lots of energy for running and chasing. Their play copies the way wild cats hunt for food.



What's in here?

Cats are very curious and make a game of exploring boxes and bags. Sometimes a hidden cat will leap out at you from under a bedsheet!

Get ready... pounce!

When a cat spies something it wants to play with, it will crouch down to watch the toy. Then it will suddenly pounce to catch it.

I can catch that

Kittens and adult cats are like acrobats when chasing a toy. They can leap up high, stand up on their back legs, and roll on their backs.

Mom, wake up!
I want to play.



I want to play

Kittens tend to play more often than adult cats, just the same as children play more than their parents.



I found it!

Play is an important part of a dog's day. Pet dogs enjoy chasing toys to bring them back.

Ball games

Puppies and adult dogs all like to play, usually with other dogs or people. Their games include chasing and play-fights.

Please play with me

Dogs can't use words, but they can let you know when they want to play. They go down on their front legs and wag their tails.



It's mine!

Disc competitions for dogs are very popular in some parts of the world. These dogs both want to be the first to bring the disc back.



showing you it is happy.

Leaping lambs

Young lambs are very playful.

They have lots of energy to run and jump. They like to explore and even climb on top of each other to see what's going on.



Stop bouncing around. It's time for dinner.



Lambs like to jump and play, but

Play nicely

Like you, lambs can get excited when they play with their friends. Sometimes they end up headbutting each other!



Flock together

Sheep prefer to spend time in groups, which are called flocks. Lambs often follow a leader, and they get upset if they're left on their own.

Thanks for the piggyback ride, Mom!



adult sheep prefer to eat or nap.

Just horsing around

Baby horses, called foals, love to play when they are not eating or sleeping (and they sleep a lot!). Playing is how foals learn about their world.



Horses enjoy rolling on the ground—it's the best way for them to scratch their backs and stretch out. This foal thinks its mom is ready to play and wants to join in.



I'm going for a run

A foal will play with its mom and with other foals, but will also race around on its own, stretching its legs and running just for the fun of it.

Let's let Mom eat!

Foals from different moms will happily play with each other if they are brought up together. This leaves their mothers free to graze.



Horses hate to be alone and form friendships that can last a lifetime. They groom each other as an important part of this friendship.

spends about half its day sleeping.

Duck rides

Ducklings can swim within a few hours of being born. But just like a small child learning to walk, they can get too tired to move.

Scoot up! You've got more room in front and I'm falling off the back.

Mom to the rescue

These Merganser ducklings are worn out from swimming all day. The journey to shore is just too far, so they get a lift home from Mom.





All aboard!

Young swans, called cygnets, take to the water when they are a day old. At the first sign of danger, they hop onto Mom's back and hide safely under her wings.



food when they're just one day old.

Fox cub fun

Arctic foxes have large litters. With seven or more brothers and sisters, a young fox has a lot of playmates.



Let's settle down
for a quick nap and
then we can play
some more.

Fox cubs spend a lot
of time rolling and
tumbling. After a hard
day's play, they all curl
up together to sleep.



I've got you!

Through play-fighting, fox cubs pick up skills they will use when hunting. They also learn how to defend themselves.

This is a good game...
and I can jump higher
than you!



Ready, aim, pounce!

In the depths of winter, an Arctic fox hunts by listening for animals under the snow and pouncing. Cubs copy the pouncing when they play.



coat and a white winter coat.

Polar playground

In the frozen Arctic, polar bears have to make their own fun. Young cubs are very curious and like to explore. Even adults enjoy rolling around on the ice.

Cub battles

Male polar bears have play-fights to show who's boss. When young cubs wrestle, they are copying the older bears.





Don't wake Mom!

A cub usually has one or two brothers and sisters. They are perfect playmates for rough and tumble games—such as using Mom as a jungle gym!

Why should
cubs have all
the fun?


up with Mom as she looks for food.

Riding the waves

With long, sleek bodies and powerful tails, dolphins are born to swim! They speed through the water in groups, and have lots of fun as they go.

Surf's up!

It's not just people who like surfing! Dolphins enjoy leaping out of the water to ride on a wave. They also swim alongside boats so they can jump through the waves the boats churn up.

A large background image showing two dolphins leaping from the water. The dolphins are dark grey with lighter underbellies, and their bodies are curved in mid-air. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the dolphins' jumps.

Whee!
We don't need
surfboards
to ride the
waves.



Roll over

Even though they are large animals, dolphins can turn a whole somersault. They push themselves out of the water with their tails and twist around in the air.

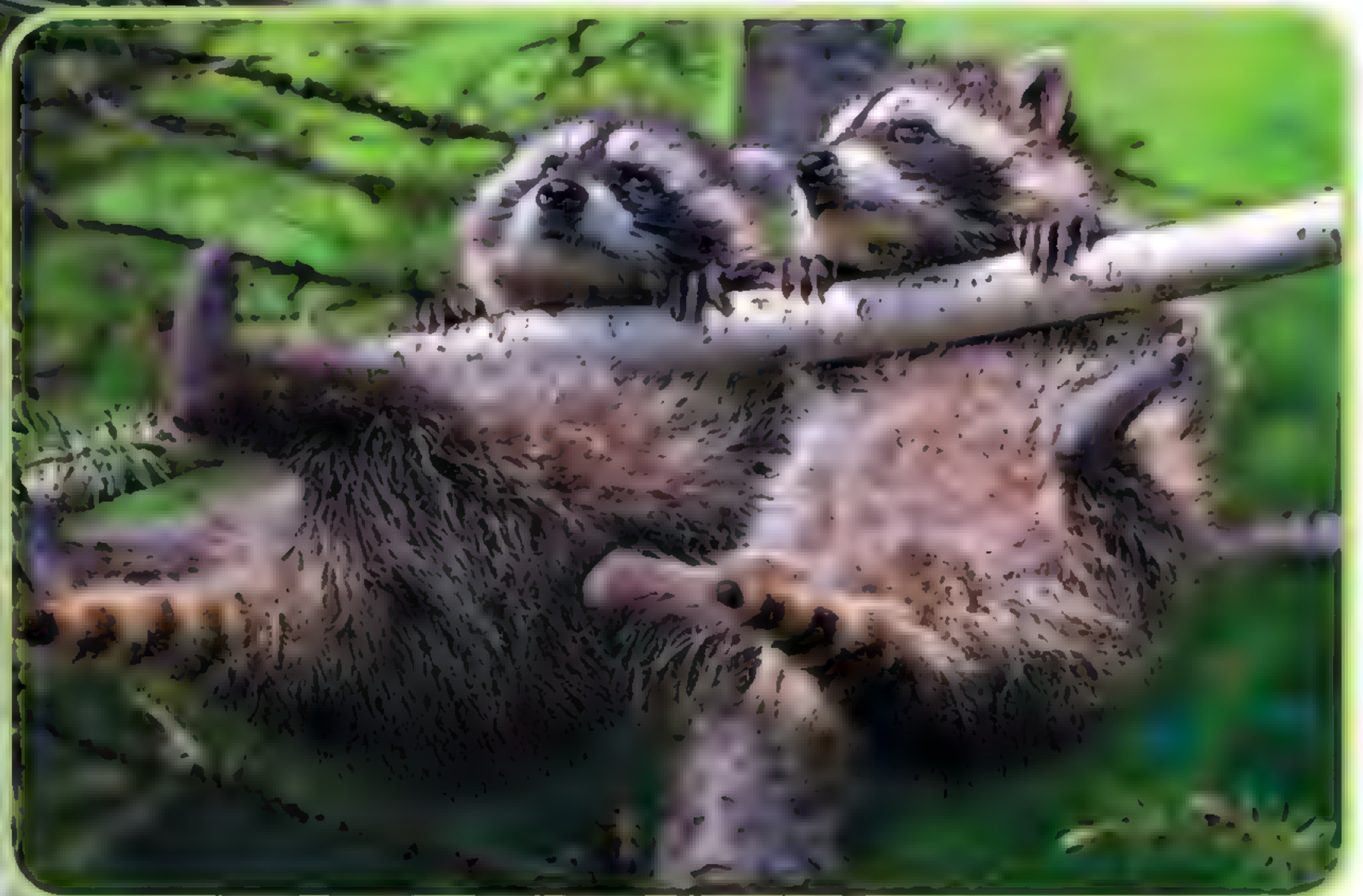


Water toys

Dolphins are smart. Just like you, they enjoy doing different things so they don't get bored. They play with seaweed, chase turtles, and play-fight with other dolphins.

Fun in the forest

Young raccoons are as playful as kittens. They like to roll around and play-fight with their brothers and sisters in their forest home.



Oops-a-daisy!

Raccoons are expert climbers. Kits develop their balance by exploring in trees—but it doesn't always go well! Kits can slip as they try to pass each other on the same branch.

Raccoon moms usually have between three and seven kits.

Room for all

A lot of raccoons must fit inside one den. They shelter inside hollow trees and in underground burrows, and even come inside people's sheds.



Is someone coming?
Quick, let's hide!



King of the castle

Mountain goats are happiest on rocky slopes. Baby goats, called kids, quickly learn to jump and leap and climb through playing.



Take that!

Young goats like to practice headbutting. Some like it more than others!



I can fly!

Goats have no fear of heights and will jump across large gaps in the rocks with ease. Their hooves have special flexible pads that help them to grip.



Can I make it?

A young goat is able to make big leaps, but will always investigate first. This goat is looking for a way to climb a boulder larger than he is.

related to antelope.

I've got you!

Otters are incredibly playful. They like to play chase with other otters—when they're not busy sliding down muddy banks or snowy slopes.

Caught you!
Now it's your
turn. Try to
catch me!



Otters are very curious and like



Speeding along

Otters enjoy running, but tobogganing is even more fun. They slide along on their stomachs before diving into the water with a splash.

Let's see who can dive the deepest.



Playing together

Most otters live in families, and they form close bonds. Otters like jumping on their brothers and sisters and rolling over in pretend fights.



In the water

Otters spend a lot of time in rivers and lakes hunting for fish, crabs, and crayfish. They also like to duck and dive with each other just for fun.

to explore their riverbank homes.

Time for a rest

Capybaras spend most of their time relaxing with their big family group. To talk to each other, they bark, grunt, whistle, and purr.

A close-up photograph of a capybara resting on the back of another capybara. The capybara in the foreground is looking directly at the camera with a calm expression. Its fur is a reddish-brown color. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a grassy field. A thought bubble is positioned in the upper right corner of the image.

That was
a nice nap.
Now it's hot,
so I'm ready to
go swimming.

Splashing around

Capybaras spend lots of their time diving and swimming. Their eyes, ears, and noses are high up on their heads. This means they can see, hear, and smell while they are swimming.



Ok, let's go.
We can eat
some grass
later.

Chilling out

On a hot afternoon, capybaras cool off in rivers and lakes. They laze around in the water for hours with their parents, brothers, and sisters. In the evening, they go to find food.



hours after they are born.

It's a bear's life

A mother bear usually has between one and four cubs. Cubs play with Mom as much as they can, but brothers and sisters will spend hours playing together.



Water fights

While these cubs enjoy splashing each other, they are also learning adult behavior.

Adults will protect their catch of fish if another bear gets too close.



It's mine!

A bear has powerful jaws. If two cubs want to play with the same stick, they'll both try their hardest to keep it.

Oh no, I've
climbed so high
I don't know how
to get back down!

Up we go

Bears are excellent climbers, but sometimes the cubs will get a bit stuck. Going up is easy. Climbing back down is a little bit harder.



also like to play in rivers and lakes.

Look behind you!

Meerkats live in gangs of up to 30 adults and pups. Adults take turns looking after the young pups, who are always busy playing.

What's that over there?

I'm gonna get you while the babysitter's not looking!



Building bonds

When living in a big group, it's important for everyone to get along. Playing helps pups to make friends and build trust.

On guard

Meerkats are always alert for danger, even while they sunbathe to get warm. Full of energy, pups prefer to look for insects instead.



Meerkats live in deserts in Africa.

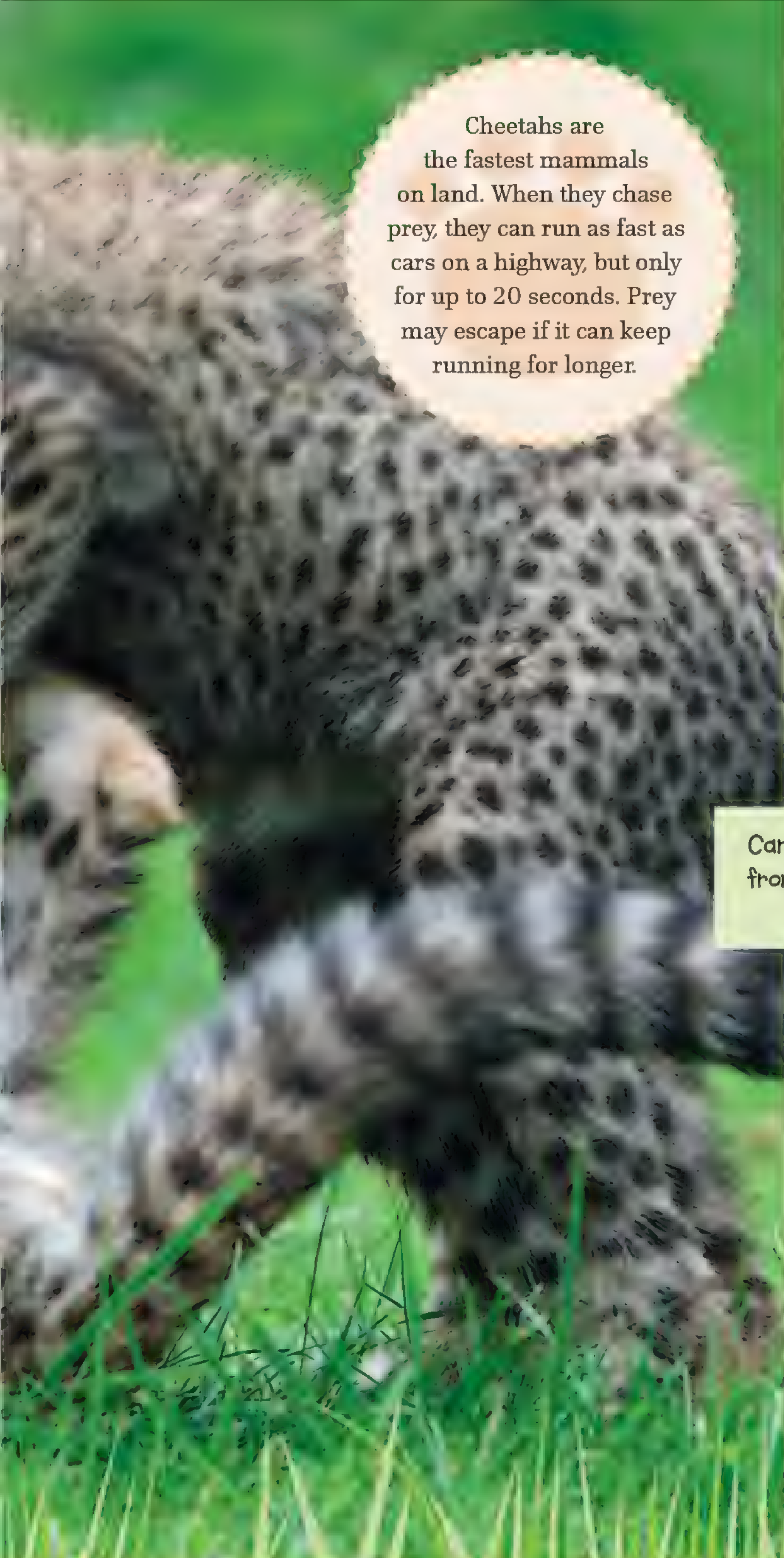
Spot the cheetah

Cheetahs hunt over large areas of grassland. Cubs need to learn to spot, chase, and attack prey, and practice on each other.

Fighting tooth and claw

Cheetahs trip up their prey with their claws and then attack it with their teeth. Wrestling cubs copy these moves—but more gently!






Cheetahs are the fastest mammals on land. When they chase prey, they can run as fast as cars on a highway, but only for up to 20 seconds. Prey may escape if it can keep running for longer.



Family ties

Cheetah moms can have three or four cubs. Young cheetahs leave their mother before they are 20 months old, but brothers can stay together for their whole lives.



Can you see any prey from up there? I want to look!

by copying their parents.

A day of play

Young chimpanzees are just like children. They can spend a whole day playing games with their friends. Adults like to play, too, because it helps them make friends within their group.

Time out

Favorite chimp games include swinging on branches, chasing, and wrestling. After a hard day's play, chimps head to the trees and make a nest of leaves to rest in.



Let's go faster!

Most chimps have one baby, but some have twins. Young chimps ride around on Mom's back until they are five years old. Then Mom will have a new baby to carry around.




Chimpanzees are primates (a kind of mammal). All monkeys and apes are primates—and so are people. In fact, chimps are our nearest animal relatives. This is why they sometimes act just like us.



Can you see food?

These young chimps peer inside a termite mound to find some tasty termites to eat. They learn this and many other actions by copying adults and turning it into a game.

even laugh. It sounds like panting.

A young elephant is the central focus, standing in a muddy pool. It is splashing mud onto its trunk, which is raised towards its head. The elephant's skin is a dark brown color, and its trunk is thick and wrinkled. The background shows a savanna landscape with trees and a clear sky.

I love throwing
water and mud
around with my
trunk. Did I
splash you?

Elephants live
in hot places, such as
India and Africa. They love
mud pools. Mud acts as
nature's sunscreen. It adds a
protective layer to their skin,
helping to stop sunburn
and prevent insect
bites.

Playing in the mud

Elephants like to spend time together, and moms and babies share messy mud baths. It's lots of fun and keeps them healthy.



Elephants live in groups called herds. They all help each other. If a baby elephant gets stuck in mud, it's not long before an adult or two will help it out.

I'm going to win this trunk-wrestling game!



Mud, glorious mud

Does your mom get mad when you get muddy? Elephant moms don't! They teach their babies to roll in the mud as a way to keep cool in the hot sun.

Elephants use their long trunks to smell and to introduce themselves. They also use them to play games of trunk wrestling or tug-of-war.

Caught you!

Lion cubs need to learn to hunt. This is how they will catch their food when they grow up. They gain hunting skills through wrestling and chasing other cubs—but they don't really hurt each other.

Finding their role

Female adult lions hunt in a team. Some lionesses chase the prey, and others kill it. When cubs wrestle each other, it helps them find out which job they would do best.



Come here!

Just like small cats, lion cubs love to chase anything that moves. This is good practice for finding and chasing prey in the wide, open grasslands where they live.



There's always someone for



Lions are the only big cats that live in groups, called prides. There are usually between four and six female lions in a pride. Each mom can have up to six cubs, so there are lots of cubs to play with.

You can try to hold me back Dad, but I'll bite!

a cub to play with in a pride.

Monkey business

There can be up to 60 baboons of all ages in a troop. The young members spend a lot of their time playing.



Time to groom

Baboons, like all monkeys, spend time grooming each other. It's a way to show friendship.

A photograph of two baboons on a thick, dark tree branch. One baboon is sitting on the branch, looking towards the left. Another baboon is in mid-air, jumping over the first baboon. The background is a blurred natural setting.

Whee! I like playing leapfrog!

Baboons talk to each other using



This way, that way

Monkeys can move fast. They will leap and twist very suddenly to change direction. It's fun, and also helps them to avoid trouble.

Muscle building

Jumping, swinging, and climbing trees helps young baboons to grow strong. They need to keep up with the troop when they get older.

barks, grunts, clicks, and calls.

Pandas at play

Giant pandas eat mostly bamboo. This doesn't give them much energy, but they still love to play!

Mom, I think you're having even more fun than I am!



Panda moms have been known



What shall we play?

Giant pandas live alone in the wild, but in panda centers cubs might live together. They like wrestling and tumbling with each other and even share toys.

Climbing trees

Much of the time, pandas like to sleep. They shelter in trees, so cubs quickly learn how to climb. They can scramble up a tree when they are just six months old.

These black and white bears live in mountain forests in China. They are very rare and need protecting. There are more pandas being looked after in conservation centers than there are in the wild.

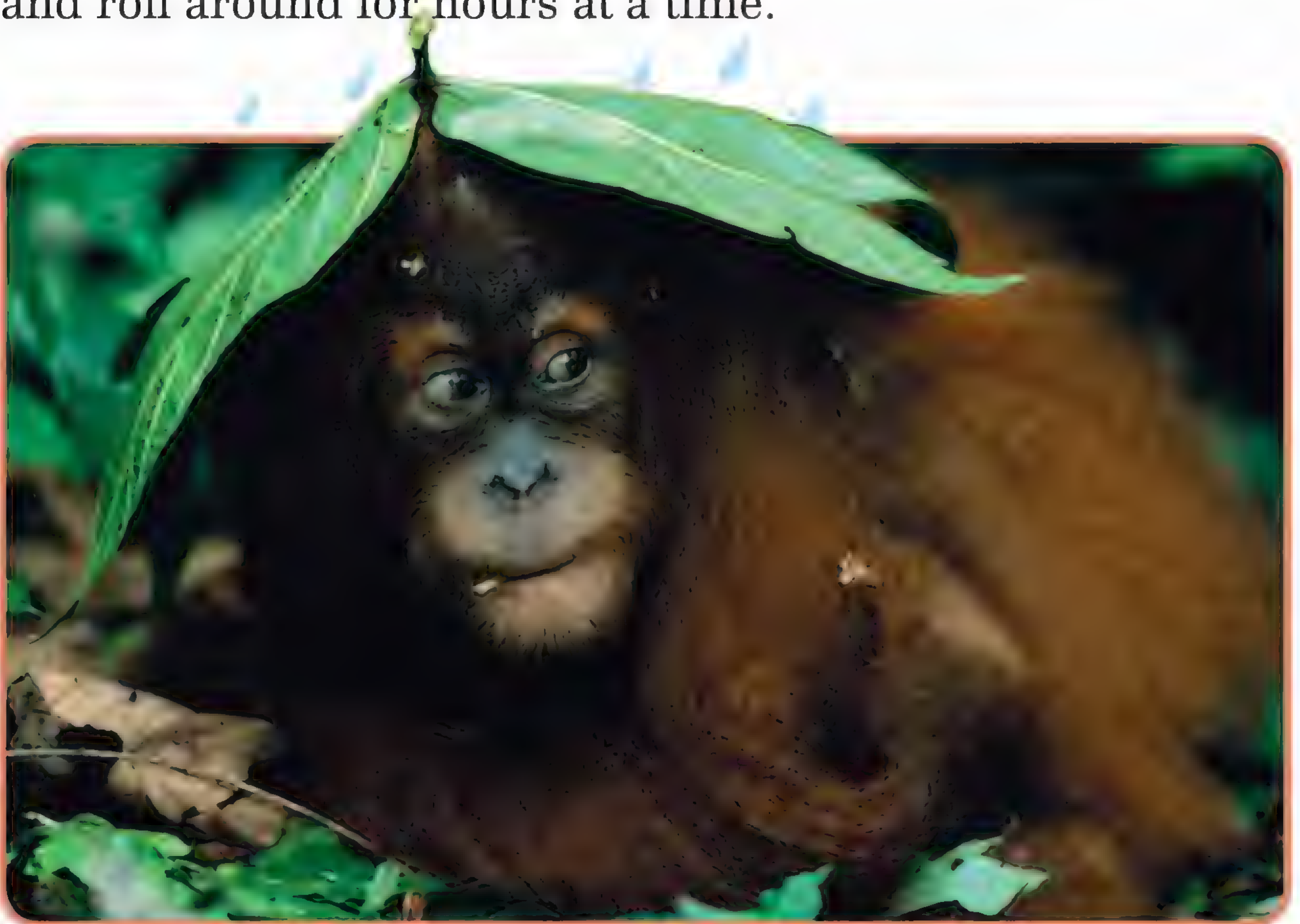


It's a long way down.
I'm glad I have sharp
claws to hang on!

to wake up their cubs to play.

Hanging around

Orangutans usually live alone, but when youngsters are brought together in refuges, they love to play. They tickle and chase each other, have play-fights, and roll around for hours at a time.



Is this a good umbrella?

Some animals use tools. Orangutans have found that large leaves make useful umbrellas to keep them dry when it rains. They hate to get wet!



A tight grip

Orangutan babies stay with Mom until they are about eight years old. They are happy in their treetop homes from a young age, thanks to strong arms and feet that can grasp.



sleeping nests from branches.

Hop, skip, and jump

When it's time for a group of sifakas to move, they all travel together through the forests of Madagascar.

It's a bouncy ride for a baby clinging to its mother's back!



Getting to know you

When two sifakas meet, they may attack each other. This is less likely if they get to know each other.

The best way to do this is through a game of wrestling or a massage.



My long legs, arms,
and tail help me keep
my balance.



Do the locomotion

Sifakas are expert at climbing trees, but aren't so good at walking. Instead they bound along the ground. Huge strides help them cover enormous distances very quickly.

treetops, leaping from trunk to trunk.


Let's make snowballs

Japanese macaques live high up in the snow-covered mountains and forests of Japan. They really know how to have fun in the winter!



Having a ball

Young macaques enjoy rolling snow into balls. They carry the snowballs around and stand on them, but don't throw them.



This is MY
snowball. No
one will take it
away from me!



Play nicely


Up to 100 macaques live in a troop, so there are always lots of friends to play with. Moms and dads share in looking after all the youngsters.



It's cold out here!

It gets very cold in the mountains in winter. To warm up, macaques sit in the water or steam from hot springs. It's like having a hot bath on a cold day.

called snow monkeys.

A large sea lion is in the foreground, swimming towards the right. Its body is dark brown and sleek. In the background, another sea lion is swimming away from the viewer towards the left. The water is a clear, vibrant blue. Bubbles are visible in the upper right corner.

These two sea lions
are playing chase.

Sea lions use their
strong front flippers
to move their bodies
through the water.

Surfing sea lions

Sea lions live in large groups
and spend quite a lot of time
playing in the water. They are
known for being smart and
have good memories.

You won't catch
me—I can dodge
out of your way!



Surfing the waves

Sea lions seem to enjoy surfing in breaking waves, just like people enjoy body surfing. Groups will gather to play together.



I'm an acrobat

On land, sea lions are a little bit clumsy, but in the sea their bodies are the perfect shape to cut through the water with ease.



and nostrils when they dive.

Easy does it

Koalas don't have much energy or time for playing—they spend 18 hours asleep every day! The rest of the time, they eat.

Group hug

Wild koalas live alone, but only where there are other koalas. But koalas in refuges seem to like spending lots of time with others.

I wish I could escape to my own tree and have some peace and quiet.



Koalas live in eucalyptus forests in



In the trees

Koalas spend most of their time in trees. They climb slowly through treetops to find leaves to eat and can jump from trunk to trunk.



Time to move

A baby koala is called a joey. It spends its first six months inside its mother's pouch. Then it clings to her back for the next six months as she moves around the trees.



Ready, set, go!

Penguins, such as these Adélies, live in large colonies. They can often be spotted playing follow the leader. Where one goes, the rest will follow.



Wait for me!

Here we go.
Flippers back,
head down...

Ready to leap

Penguins rest on ice, but have to enter the water to find food. They often make a leap and dive in, which looks like fun.

Tobogganing

Penguins walk slowly,
but sliding along on their
bellies is much faster.
They also seem to enjoy it.



Keep up!
Lie on your
stomach and push
with your feet.

This is fun!
Now let's find
some fish.



just like dolphins.

Making friends

Wild animals usually play with others in their own group—it's safest that way. But pets often meet different animals, and some become fast friends.




Will you be my friend?

Horses are “herd animals”—in the wild, they live in groups. If a horse has no other horses around, it will find another animal to bond with. Dogs do this, too.



Animals need to trust each

A photograph of a small, fluffy kitten with dark and light brown fur climbing on the back of a large tortoise. The tortoise is moving slowly across a green lawn. The kitten is perched on the tortoise's shell, looking down at it. The tortoise's head and front leg are visible in the foreground.

Come on, Tortoise.
I want to go
faster!

Young kittens like to explore. This one has never met a tortoise before and has climbed on top to check it out. If the kitten felt the tortoise were a threat, it would run away.

I'm going as fast
as I can!

other to play together.

Glossary

When you're learning about animals, it helps to know the meanings of some special words you'll find in this book.

colony a large group of animals (such as penguins) that lives closely together.

conservation the protection of a particular area and the living things it contains.

cygnet a young swan. Cygnets have gray feathers. Adult swans have white feathers.

flipper a flattened limb. Sea lions have flippers, as do dolphins.

flock a group of sheep or birds that lives together.

foal a horse that is less than one year old.

grooming when an animal cleans its fur or another animal's fur.

herd a large group of hoofed animals that lives or travels together.

hunt the way in which an animal follows its prey.

kit a baby racoon.

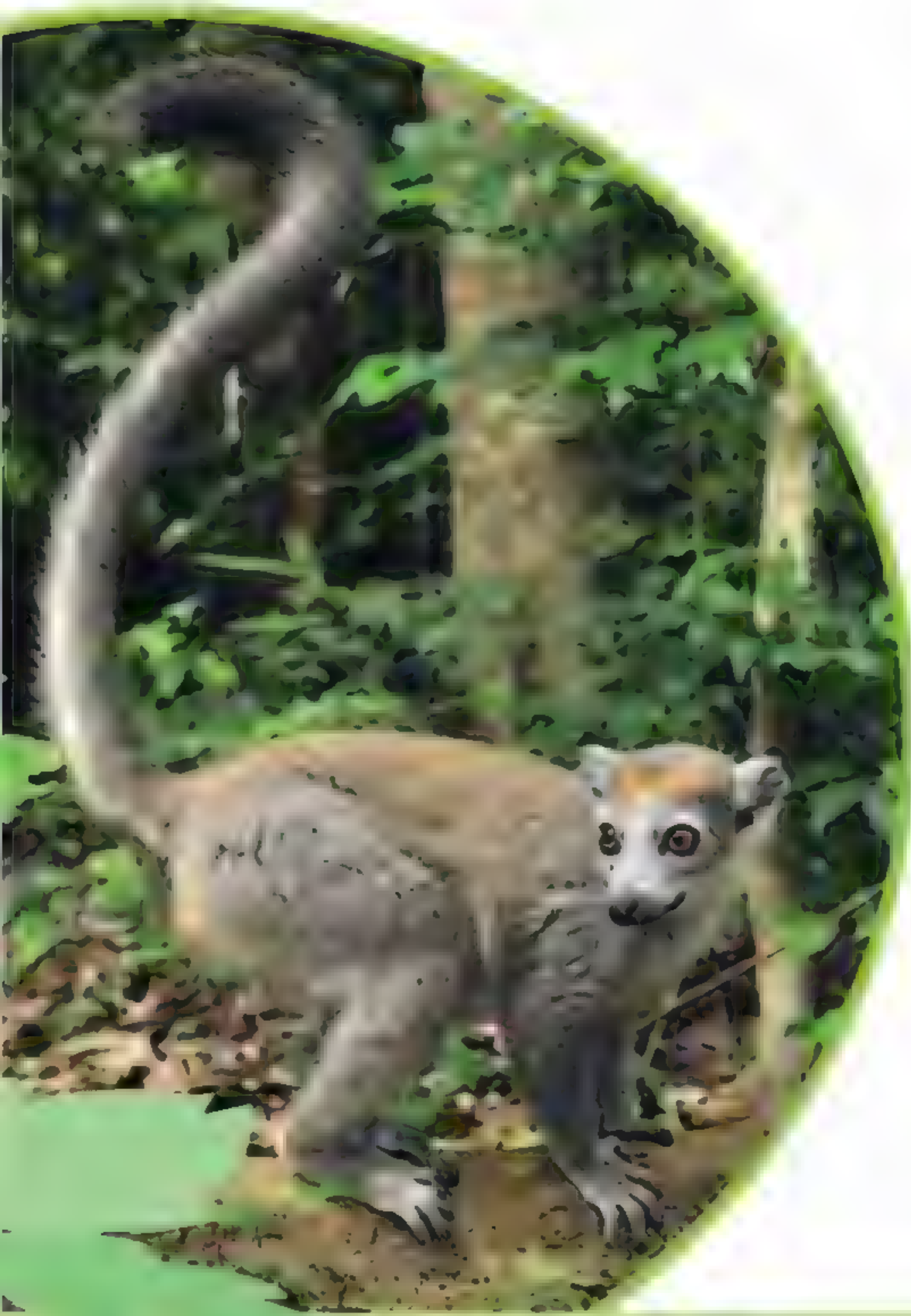
litter the name given to a group of newborn animals, such as kittens, that are born to the same mother.


prey an animal that is hunted for food.

pride a group of lions that lives and hunts together.

refuge an animal refuge is a place of safety, where injured animals are cared for and rare animals are protected.

troop a group of monkeys.





Bye, bye! I hope
you've learned a lot
about the different
ways we like to play.

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Index

Adélie penguin 58-59

Arctic fox 18-19

baboon 44-45

bear 32-33

capybara 30-31

cat 8-9, 42

chasing 5, 8, 9, 10, 38, 42,
48, 54

cheetah 36-37

chimpanzees 38-39

climbing 4, 6, 12, 24, 26, 33,
45, 47, 49, 57

copying 19, 20, 37, 39

cygnet 17

diving 29, 31

dog 5, 10-11, 60

dolphin 22-23, 59

duck 16-17

elephant 40-41

exploring 8, 12, 29

foal 14-15

fox 5, 18-19

grooming 15, 44

hamster 6-7

headbutting 13, 26

horse 14-15, 60

hunting 5, 8, 19, 29, 36, 42

Japanese macaque 52-53

jumping 12, 26, 27, 45, 57

kitten 8-9, 60

koala 56-57

lamb 12-13

lion 42-43

meerkat 34-35

monkeys 4-5, 39, 44-45, 52-53

mountain goats 26-27

mud 40, 41

orangutan 48-49

otter 28-29

pandas 46-47

penguin 58-59

play-fighting 10, 19, 20, 22, 23,
24, 29, 48

polar bear 20-21

pouncing 5, 8, 19

raccoons 24-25

riding 16-17, 39

rolling 14, 18, 20, 24, 48

sea lion 54-55

sheep 12-13

sifaka 50-51

sleeping 6, 15, 18, 47, 56

sliding 28, 29, 59

sunbathing 35

surfing 22, 55

swan 17

swimming 16, 30, 31

tickling 38, 48

tobogganing 29, 59

toys 8, 9, 10, 22, 47

wrestling 20, 36, 38, 41, 42,
47, 51

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They run and jump around.
They hug and play with friends.

Just like you!



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monkeys make snowballs, and
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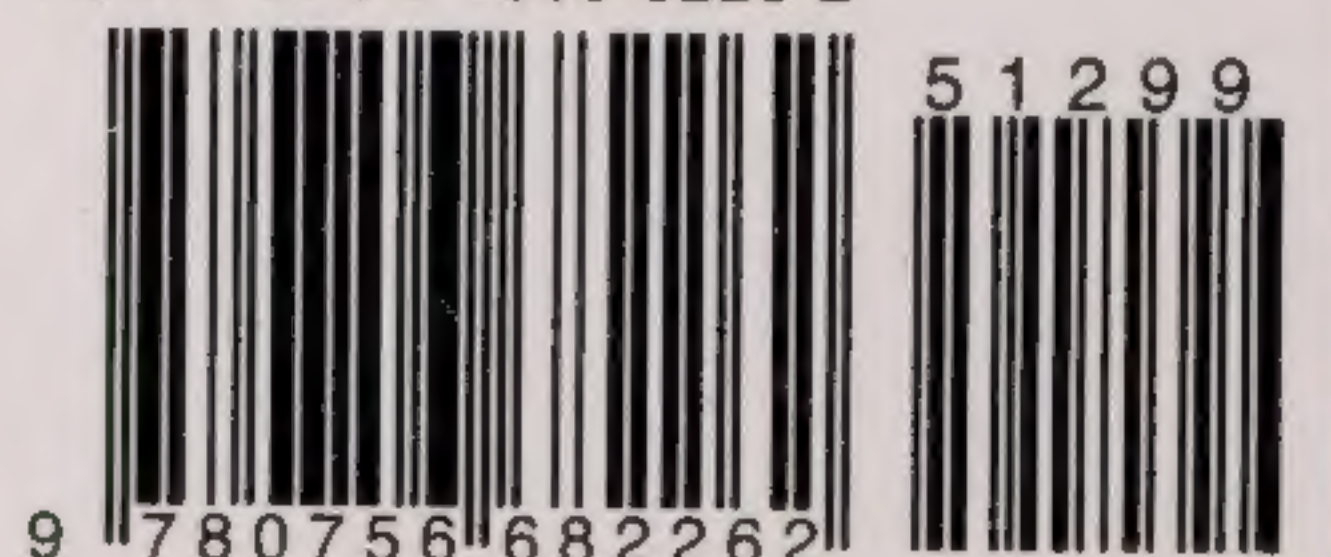


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